Zero Retries 0242

2026-03-13 - What's New at DLARC, NewTechHams Are My Hope For The Future, CoronaSDR for IOS, Discovery Drive, AREDN Evangelizes Modern Amateur Radio, MFJ Documentary, and more.

Steve Stroh N8GNJ and Kay Savetz K6KJN

Zero Retries is an independent newsletter promoting technological innovation in and adjacent to Amateur Radio, and Amateur Radio as (literally) a license to experiment with and learn about radio technology. Radios are computers - with antennas! Now in its fifth year of publication, with 3500+ subscribers.

Steve Stroh N8GNJ, Editor

editor@zeroretries.net

Tina Stroh KD7WSF, Business / Conference Manager

tina@zeroretries.net

This issue of Zero Retries was originally published on Ghost - https://www.zeroretries.radio/zero-retries-0242/. Thus all links that were for zeroretries.radio have (attempted to) been changed to equivalents on zeroretries.org.

See this archive page:
https://web.archive.org/web/20260407182624/https://www.zeroretries.radio/zero-retries-0242/
for how it originally appeared on www.zeroretries.radio.

*Substack says this issue is **too big for email clients**. Thus, it might be easier to read in a web browser - https://www.zeroretries.org/p/zero-retries-0242-052*

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Request To Send

(Invalid) Security Warnings for www.zeroretries.radio - Part 5

Administrivia Alert!

Microsoft*... (sigh...)*

Earlier this week, some Zero Retries readers continued to report "security" issues with zeroretries.radio *when using Microsoft systems*. I was able to replicate a surprising issue in Microsoft Edge browser:

Using **www.zeroretries.radio** in Microsoft Edge... *works fine*!

However, using **zeroretries.radio** (no www) in Microsoft Edge, redirects to www.zeroretries.radio (per the CNAME), *but then throws up a scary warning notice per* ***Microsoft Defender SmartScreen***.

Clicking **More Information**...

- Clicking **Report that this site doesn't contain phishing threats**, I filled out the form as the site owner explaining things as best I could (twice, now).
- Clicking **Continue to the unsafe site (not recommended)** seemed to clear the issue (on my system), but when I cleared all cookies, etc. and tried again, it happened again. Apparently clicking through this notice changes the behavior only on the local system (sets a cookie).

It was suggested by a Zero Retries reader that's ex-Microsoft, that I reach out to a Microsoft employee and request they "clear zeroretries.radio from inside". But, I don't currently know any (active) Microsoft employees; all of my Microsoft contacts are now *ex-Microsoft*.

Thus all I can do is continuing to fill out the Microsoft form and hope my request eventually does get noticed by a human or a bot... and they actually check zeroretries.radio and see there's nothing "phishy" going on.

Last minute update: *That issue seems to have been cleared*. Using Microsoft Edge browser on my Mac... seems to work fine for both zeroretries.radio and www.zeroretries.radio.

Paid Subscriptions for Zero Retries to Resume Soon

Because Zero Retries is no longer being published on Substack, we've disabled paid subscriptions (new and renewals) in Substack.

Because of the pressures of getting ready for our travel this week, Tina and I weren't able to complete the delicate process of connecting the Zero Retries Stripe account to Zero Retries on Ghost, which enables us to set up paid subscription tiers (*which have been, and always will be* ***optional!!!***) . That's coming in the next couple of weeks or so after we return from our current travel.

All "extras" (still in process) of Paid Subscriber status on Substack will transfer to Paid Subscriber status on Ghost.

Stealth Sponsorships Available - Founding Members

The newest Zero Retries Founding Member is **Founding Member 0024** - Rob Bowser KO4HUI. As a Founding Member of Zero Retries, KO4HUI is listed in every issue of Zero Retries.

K04HUI made a unique request for his Founding Member listing in each issue of Zero Retries to be:

Rob Bowser (SPOOLTENNA)

SPOOLTENNA is KO4HUI's new small business and product:

SPOOLTENNA is a compact, lightweight 40-10m end fed half wave antenna that was specifically designed for portable amateur radio operations like Parks on the Air® (POTA) and Summits on the Air™ (SOTA). Its innovative spool form factor is intended to ensure rapid deployment and teardown, providing a frustration-free operating experience that doesn't compromise performance.

KO4HUI's request was a reasonable extension to the mention of each Founding Member in every issue of Zero Retries, and I was happy to oblige.

Thus I wanted to mention this possibility for current or future Founding Members - a subtle, brief mention of a project, product, or company or product in every issue of Zero Retries as part of your Founding Member acknowledgement.

We Love Random Wire Newsletter / EtherHam Too!

In Random Wire Newsletter 173, Tina and I, Zero Retries, and our Zero Retries Digital Conference received a nice shout out by Random Wire Editor Tom Salzer KJ7T. His work in Random Wire nicely complements the content mix of Zero Retries. It's a must-read-right-now publication for me and is Zero Retries Interesting and ***Recommended***! If you're into operating Amateur Radio via Internet, as well as a lot of good practical tips about advanced networking in your household, you're missing a lot of great content on that subject in Random Wire and KJ7T's companion website EtherHam.

Hamvention 2026 Ho!

9 weeks until Hamvention 2026
in Xenia, Ohio, USA...

This week's installment of the Zero Retries Hamvention 2026 saga *seems a bit silly to have to do.* We want to reassure Zero Retries / DLARC / Ham Radio Weekly fans that *there will be a Zero Retries (+ DLARC) booth* at Hamvention 2026 - Building 1 / Maxim, in Booth **1506**. This reassurance seems necessary because of the status of Zero Retries on the official public commercial exhibitors list lingering as "*Reserved*" rather than "**Confirmed**". Apparently the payment processing / confirmation system behind the scenes at Hamvention moves... *deliberately*.

Post Publication Update: *Zero Retries's booth at Hamvention 2026 is now* ***Confirmed****, thanks to the efforts of Tina KD7WSF, Zero Retries Business Manager.*

I'll have a dedicated page for Zero Retries at Hamvention 2026 up soon. And we'll (actually... *Tina* will...) get busy on one of those more eye-catching line ads in the official public commercial exhibitors list.

New Zero Retries One Pagers

For HamSCI 2026 we developed a new One Pager handout, and a table display sign, both with QR codes, for Zero Retries, revised for early 2026 and the new www.zeroretries.radio domain.

Post Publication Update: *With the change to www.zeroretries.org, the original versions were deprecated. Current versions can be downloaded from:*

Zero Retries Flyers / Handouts / One Pagers

If you would like to receive one of these electronic versions for printing and distribution at a conference, or Amateur Radio club meeting... or whatever (I should have offered them to AREDN in time for their SCALE 23x booth), please reach out to Tina KD7WSF.

3500+ Zero Retries Email Subscribers

No longer "nearly 3500", or 3500'ish...

In 2026 to date, the email subscriber counts for Zero Retries have been rough estimates. Email subscribers were split between existing email subscribers on Substack, and new email subscribers on Ghost. There were a number of email subscribers who unsubscribed (some in disgust at the "chaos" of the changeover). Others try Zero Retries, and find it's not for them. Thus the email subscriber count was in flux.

Finally, I was able to do the "big email merge" a couple of weeks ago, after which there was finally just *one* list of email subscribers (on Ghost). The "big email merge" cleared out some duplicates, but knocked the total subscriber count down significantly.

Folks continue to find their way to Zero Retries (some still finding their way to Substack, and I add them to the Zero Retries email list on Ghost). In the past month, there are typically three, and sometimes as many as ten new email subscribers per week. This week, the email subscriber total ticked up comfortably above 3500. Woo Hoo!

As always, I offer a disclaimer that when I announce a new email subscriber total that it's not the number that matters, it's that the *number continues to grow steadily*. This is just a basic indication of interest in Zero Retries. There are also many Zero Retries readers that don't subscribe via email -

they read Zero Retries when prompted by mentions on social media, or they follow Zero Retries via RSS.

Thanks folks! Without readers, there would be little purpose in writing Zero Retries!

Weekends Are For Amateur Radio!

This weekend Tina KD7WSF and I will be attending the HamSCI 2026 Workshop in New Britain, Connecticut, USA. We had a great time at HamSCI 2025 in Newark, New Jersey USA and the combination of Tina being able to spend some time back in New Jersey before and after the conference, the HamSCI conference, and getting to see ARRL Headquarters on Saturday is a nice combination for us.

One new highlight of traveling in New Jersey for me was discovering the Green Brook Electronics (GBE) store in North Plainfield, New Jersey. ***Recommended!*** GBE is second in "fun browsing surplus electronics in a retail store" only to the (now closed) Fair Radio Sales in Lima, Ohio. The photos on GBE's website don't do it justice. The actual store is *sprawling* and far more "interesting" and "overflowing with stock" than the website photos suggest. If you're a fan of vintage electronics like I am, I suggest allocating at least an hour to visit GBE.

Have a great weekend, all of you co-conspirators in Zero Retries Interesting Amateur Radio activities!

Please direct comments / feedback about this ***Request To Send*** *to the Zero Retries email list with the #ZR0242 hashtag.*

Steve N8GNJ

Image courtesy of Internet Archive / Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications

What's New at Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications — March 2026

By Kay Savetz K6KJN

Big things are happening with DLARC and Australia. DLARC is now an archive of the Wireless Institute of Australia Weekly News Broadcast (WIA News). Edited by Graham Kemp VK4BB for more than 30 years, each 30-minute weekly broadcast focuses on "what is happening in our 'Wonderful Ham World'", with a lens on Australia, naturally, but plenty of international news reports as well. We have 878 episodes in the library, all with scripts, all full-text searchable.

Also coming from the Land Down Under, DLARC has added the newsletter of the Ballarat Amateur Radio Group. This club was founded in 1980 and has been publishing its member newsletter

continuously since. We now archive all 252 issues of this charming newsletter, which combines technical discussions (conductive polymer hybrid aluminium electrolytic capacitors) with community news … and, let's be honest, fewer photos of wallabies than I would personally prefer.

What's farther away than Australia? Space! I'm thrilled to announce a new sub-collection in DLARC's Radio Conferences collection: the AMSAT Symposium archive. Here you'll find proceedings, audio, and video from AMSAT Symposium, the annual conference run by the Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation. The earliest proceedings and papers we have are from the 1986 AMSAT Space Symposium — and we have proceedings and papers all the way through 2012. But wait, there's more! We also have audio recordings of presentations and the accompanying slide decks from the 2004and 2012 conferences. Those came from wonderful CD-ROMs published by AMSAT. I'd love to get my hands on the discs from other years' shows. In the mean time, there's incredible information here about ARISS and robotics and Cubesat and SETI and … converting a barbecue grill to an antenna for satellite communication.

Closer to home (but still DX) we've added a complete archive of The VHF DX Podcast, hosted by Nick Langan and Bryce Foster. This show is laser-focused on FM DX: long distance FM radio reception. It's been published sporadically since 2021: there are only 26 epodes so far, because they publish only when there's good FM DX to talk about. It's a relatively rare phenomenon, so there are sometimes months between shows. I had a fun conversation with Mr. Langan about the American Ionospheric Propagation Association — folks who were tuning into FM DX in the late 1950s and early 1960s. (I hear that was a great time for FM DX because of the sunspot cycle, and a lower noise floor verses the buzzy electrical devices than we have today.) You can read about those glory days for yourself: DLARC has many (maybe all? It's hard to know for sure) issues of the AIPA TV-DX newsletter.

Last month I wrote about Internet Archive patron Curtis Philips' beautiful scans of Electrical Experimenter magazine. The one-man scanning machine is still at it, having uploaded 131 issues of Radio News AKA Radio Amateur News AKA Radio Television News AKA probably other things, because publisher Hugo Gernsback seemingly loved changing the names of his magazines with the times. The magazine started in July 1919 — Mr. Philips' lovely color scans start with issue two (August 1919). DLARC also has a more complete set of this magazine, scanned from microfilm so they're black-and-white. But Philips' color scans — vibrant covers and warm, aged inside pages — add a certain beauty to the collection.

Besides the magazines, Philips has also scanned the books Radio News 150 Radio Hook Ups (from 1926), Loomis Radio Theory And Operating(1925), Moyer & Wostrel Practical Radio (1924), and Audels New Radiomans Guide (1939).

Finally, we have lots of new documents and movies from Milwaukee (Wisconsin) Radio Amateurs' Club. The club has been diligent about documenting its history: they recently sent dozens of documents, images, and films which I added to DLARC's MRAC collection. Those come in addition to the 2,800 (!!) items already in the collection, going all the way back to a certificate from 1919 showing the club's affiliation with the ARRL. They've saved letters, meeting minutes, photographs, invoices, newsletters, rosters, and more — a fascinating and thorough record of the club and its 100-plus-year legacy.

Steve and I are planning our trip to Hamvention in May (it will be my first time!) We'll be sharing a booth [*Building 1 / Maxim, Booth 1506* - *Ed.*], where I'll be spreading the word about DLARC.

Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications is funded by a generous grant from Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC) to create a free digital library for the radio community, researchers, educators, and students. If you have questions about the project or material to contribute, contact me at kay@archive.org.

Please direct comments / feedback about this article to the Zero Retries email list with the #ZR0242 hashtag.

NewTechHams Are My Hope For The Future of Amateur Radio

By Steve Stroh N8GNJ

I received an email from a longtime Zero Retries reader that was some good food for thought. They didn't explicitly state that it was OK for me to share their email here in Zero Retries, so I'll offer a précis (new word for me - thanks ClaudeAI!).

Aside from some small glimmers of light, the hobby is largely in the grips of appliance operators.

That seems to be the core of my correspondent's pessimism that the LinHT (and similar "advanced Amateur Radio" projects, products, and services (PP&S) won't find much of an audience because they're too advanced for the "appliance operators".

*See **Zero Retries 0241** - **LinHT Revision B Making Great Progress** for a recent update on LinHT.*

This is actually a common enough plaint that it seemed reasonable to share my reply and perspective. The following was lightly edited for publication. This shouldn't be construed as "the NewTechHams are going to save Amateur Radio" - *that's a heavy lift*. But as you'll read, I have reason for optimism.

What I didn't mention in my reply, and should have, is that the label "appliance operator", to me, isn't necessarily a pejorative. Permit me a bit of a story. When we were building out the Puget Sound Amateur Radio TCP/IP Network, there were a handful of us who delighted in *building* the network - the repeaters, the routers, the user radios, trying to make it work reliably, etc. But it was the users (the appliance operators) who just wanted to connect up and use it to send messages and files to their buddies - reliably, traversing multiple repeaters, bands, and routers. And to me, the users / appliance operators were a more important part of the network builders because they were actually using this thing we built, and their usage justified the effort of having built it.

In many aspects, I consider myself an appliance operator. In some aspects of Amateur Radio, I don't want to *have to fuss with it until it works* - I just want to follow the instructions and start communicating. Amateur Radio *needs* appliance operators... that are willing to get involved with new systems such as M17, New Packet Radio, Mercury, and others to *use* them. Far too often, new systems are developed for the joy of developing... and trying to make it user friendly, to develop a reasonable user base... is a secondary consideration, and that's often a deadly perspective. It's *not a communications system* if there are no users that want to use it to communicate.

Thus my opinion differs than my correspondent's perspective that "the hobby is largely in the grips of appliance operators". I wish I could convey how much I see NewTechHams and their energy coming into Amateur Radio. At GNU Radio Conference (GRCon) 2025, I was in a room of 50 or so folks, more than half of which were already Amateur Radio Operators, and every one of them capable of "sitting down and *writing* a unique new radio" because *they were proficient in GNU Radio*. This is no different than a person very experienced in Linux being able to write an application to run on Linux. Honestly watching the rise of the NewTechHams feels like watching Linux coming from behind to surpass Windows Server. LinHT will *inevitably* cause a "*wha **happen**?*" moment amongst the "fixed function" radio users and manufacturers.

*Keep in mind that the technology of LinHT isn't confined to the portable radio form factor. That's just where the developers chose to start. Lin**Mobile** could very quickly become a realty, perhaps even more easily than LinHT.*

In Zero Retries, I try to convey this *momentum of technological innovation* that I'm seeing in Amateur Radio. But, weekly bursts of text doesn't do justice to that momentum... but I'll keep trying. Perhaps when I finally graduate to creating unique videos regularly on the Zero Retries YouTube channel, I can make more of a dent in the *same old*, ***same... old...***perception of the sad hams / and the "I'm not interested in anything new" appliance operators.

I understand why my correspondent, and so many others have that impression. Candidly, I think that's something of a case of selection bias from going to typical Amateur Radio club meetings, hamfests, the "Ooh look at the latest Chinese radio unboxing" YouTubers, etc. If my correspondent (and others) were to attend meetings of Meshtastic fans, GNU Radio gatherings, DEF CON, Zero Retries Digital Conference, etc. I think they would come away with a different impression.

The tepid reception, to date, of the LinHT is unfortunately a perfect storm:

- There's a long story about why LinHT isn't funded by grants so that a lot of LinHTs could be made and injected into Amateur Radio. Thus with minimum resources, the development of LinHT is proceeding slowly (but steadily).
- The abysmal, accidental timing of LinHT's development coinciding with punishing tariffs on electronics being shipped into the US.
- The lack of vision about the bright future of Amateur Radio by leaders in Amateur Radio (especially the Amateur Radio *industry*) that's made possible by Software Defined Radio that can be modified by the user,
- No small amount of unfortunate arrogance, etc.

I'm seeing all of these factors combine against LinHT… *and I'm still optimistic*.

Actually, I'm ***fatalistic*** that LinHT *can't* ***not*** happen. It's a perfect answer to so many plaints and longstanding issues in Amateur Radio such as single mode radios and the resulting Tower of Babel effect that an Amateur Radio Operator using a DMR radio cannot use a D-Star repeater. Etc., writ large. I don't know *what* the "spark" is going to be that is going to "ignite" the LinHT (or perhaps also the LinMobile) into widespread recognition and usage... *but the LinHT is dry tinder waiting to be lit*.

Steve N8GNJ

Please direct comments / feedback about this article to the Zero Retries email list with the #ZR0242 hashtag.

ZR > BEACON

By Steve Stroh N8GNJ

Short mentions of Zero Retries Interesting items.

CoronaSDR for IOS – a Free Native RTL_TCP Client

RTL-SDR.com blog:

Thank you to Silviu YO6SAY for writing in and sharing with us news about the release of his iOS App called "CoronaSDR" which is a native client for receiving from rtl_tcp servers. rtl_tcp is a server program for RTL-SDRs that streams raw IQ data over a network connection.

Unlike Android, iOS does not allow third-party USB devices like the RTL-SDR to run on its devices. But you can set up an rtl_tcp server on a networked PC or Raspberry Pi in your home, and connect to the data stream with an iOS app like CoronaSDR.

Silviu writes:

CoronaSDR is a free, native iOS app that connects to an rtl_tcp server on your local network (no cloud, no subscription).

Current features
• Live spectrum + waterfall (Metal / GPU-accelerated)
• Demod modes: AM / NFM / WFM / USB / LSB / CW
• RF controls: gain, PPM, direct sampling, offset tuning, bias-tee
• Stations with tags + CSV/TSV import/export
• List/range scanning with squelch hold/skip
• Background audio + lock screen controls

Known limitations (early build)
• Built solo so far — no external testers yet
• Most real-world testing to date has been NFM and WFM
• Other modes are implemented, but I'd consider them early until more field feedback comes in

Tested with an RTL-SDR Blog V4 (R828D) on a Raspberry Pi running rtl_tcp. I'd really appreciate detailed feedback (device + iOS version, tuner type, rtl_tcp command, mode/frequency, and steps to reproduce any issues).

Project page:

https://coronasdr.pages.dev/

Issues/bug reports: https://github.com/s1lviu/CoronaSDR/issues

I love this idea of a small package of a Raspberry Pi with an RTL-SDR dongle, small antenna, and an iPhone or iPad for casual viewing of the spectrum in your area.

Kudos to YO6SAY!

This is such a cool idea I might put one together for travel in time for Hamvention.

Discovery Drive - A motorized antenna rotator engineered for the Discovery Dish

The article in **Zero Retries 0241** last week - Discovery Drive Campaign Launching Soon... was just a few days ahead of the actual launch.

I was surprised at the price of this unit - $700, and at first glance, this seems about the same price as the venerable Yaesu G-5500. But reading through the description, I understand that's not the case. In my opinion, the Discovery Drive is actually a good option for VHF / UHF Azimuth / Elevation antennas being used to track Low Earth Orbit satellites, especially if your use case for such a unit is portable or temporary operation.

From my perspective the attributes of the Discovery Drive are:

- Designed for portable operation (lighter weight, DC power input - that USB-C was suitable was surprising),

- Apparently pretty mechanically robust,
- More modern interfaces such as Wi-Fi and USB, without external / third party interface units required,
- More robust than the lower cost alternatives,
- Weather resistant (the less expensive options are not),
- It's an advantage that the entire design is open source - it can be extended into areas and use cases not originally envisioned.

This wouldn't be a common use case, but I could imagine this being used for accessing different mountain top nodes (such as AREDN or HamWAN) nodes. Uncommon, and perhaps impractical as buying multiple AREDN / HamWAN nodes is less expensive than one Discover Drive alone... but the Discover Drive makes such usage possible.

I don't currently have the available N8GNJ / Zero Retries Labs discretionary budget for this unit, so I'll miss out on the introductory pricing. There are a few projects that are ahead of it in the N8GNJ / Zero Retries Lab purchase queue. But I've always wanted an azimuth / elevation rotor for tracking LEO satellites, and now that there are some Zero Retries Interesting LEO satellites on the horizon (pun intended) such as a PACSAT or two, this unit is definitely in the purchase queue.

AREDN Evangelizes Modern Amateur Radio Networking at SCALE Conference

Orv Beach W6BI (AREDN Ambassador) via the AREDN Facebook Group:

Image courtesy of Orv Beach W6BI.
Pictured - Tim Wilkinson KN6PLV, one of the AREDN Lead Developers.

AREDN once again had a booth at SCALe (the Southern California Linux Expo). We had good traffic past the booth on Friday, very busy on Saturday, and light traffic on Sunday (very typical).

Something different this year was that SCALE hosted KB6NU and his Ham In A Day training class, one on Friday and one on Saturday. Several dozen hams were minted out of the follow-on testing. And being geeks, quite a few of the new hams made their way to the AREDN booth for an indoctrination 😊

Note the lack of gray hair in the listeners in the photo above.

Long time Zero Retries readers might consider what follows to be a tired refrain... but consider that *everyone attending SCALE 23x was there for their interest in Linux*, not Amateur Radio. But AREDN presented *a facet of Amateur Radio that was relevant and interesting **to them** within that context of Linux (and networking).*

Thus (thanks to Dan Romanchik KB6NU) there are now several dozen more NewTechHams in Amateur Radio, looking around with what to do next with their new Amateur Radio license. Obviously they got exposed to AREDN, but there's a lot more interesting things to do, and we really have to figure it out, as a community, to help them with that.

Second Edition of VHF, Summits, and More

Bob Witte K0NR on his The KØNR Radio Site blog:

Big news — I'm proud to announce that the Second Edition of my book *VHF, Summits, and More* is now available. I've received tons of positive feedback on the first edition, published in 2019, and I decided it was time for an update. This new version is printed in color, which greatly enhances the photos and graphics.

This book is an easy-to-understand introduction to VHF/UHF ham radio with an emphasis on mountaintop VHF operation. I've enjoyed ham radio and writing about it ever since I received my first FCC license. Although I've used the ham bands from 160m to 3cm (10 GHz), I find the VHF and higher frequencies the most interesting. This is mainly because of the interplay between mountains, Height Above Average Terrain (HAAT), and VHF propagation. VHF has lots of spectrum, lots of modes, and lots of fun challenges.

For the second edition, I gave everything a fresh look. I updated every chapter and added 100 pages of new material. In Part I, the VHF tutorial section, I added new chapters to improve the treatment of basic VHF/UHF: Popular VHF/UHF Bands, Antennas, Coaxial Cables & Connectors, and WSJT-X Digital Modes. Part II covers topics that originated from my blog, often based on questions I hear from newer hams. In Part III, which is focused on SOTA, I added several chapters on how to be successful doing VHF SOTA, and I added a few new trip reports. I also added some information on combined SOTA/POTA activations.

I'm really happy to see this new book, particularly that it has 100 pages of new material. This is one of those books that's not only fun and interesting to read (K0NR is a good writer) and one can always learn new things. But it's handy to have a book like K0NR's that's a counterpoint for "*Oh, Ham Radio... is that still a thing?*" - particularly for younger, more active folks for whom Parks On The Air / Summits On The Air (POTA / SOTA) activities would be appealing with an Amateur Radio station in one's backpack.

And... K0NR has *embraced data modes* - at least the WSJT-X data modes!

This book (actually two of them so that I'll be able to hand to a prospective new Amateur Radio Operator) is now in my *to be purchased* queue for when we're back from travel.

MFJ Documentary / Martin F. Jue: Life and Legacy

A documentary about MFJ Enterprises, ingenuity, legacy, and community.

Martin F. Jue is an engineer, inventor, and entrepreneur whose journey began in the Mississippi Delta, where he was raised in the back of a family-run grocery store. From building crystal radios as a child to founding one of the largest amateur radio accessory companies in the world, Martin's life reflects the power of persistence, creativity, and technical curiosity. A graduate of Mississippi State and Georgia Tech, he returned to Starkville to teach and build. MFJ Enterprises began with a single filter circuit and grew into a globally recognized brand. Quietly tenacious and profoundly inventive, Martin remains a quintessential figure synonymous with the words "amateur radio", known as much for his humility as his engineering prowess.

This is a very Zero Retries Interesting project. There was a lot of technological innovation developed by MFJ over the decades. Cost reduction (at which MFJ excelled) of complex devices certainly counts as technological innovation. From personal experience, MFJ contributed a lot of technological innovation in Amateur Radio Packet Radio.

I also had not taken into account that a core value of MFJ was to manufacture as many of its products as possible at its factory in Starkville, Mississippi, ***USA*** assembled by MFJ employees in Starkville.

This documentary isn't yet completed and is still *actively fundraising* to be able to complete it.

[ARISS Beyond the ISS]

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station web page:

With 25 years of experience connecting astronauts and cosmonauts to tens of thousands of kids and adults around the world via amateur radio, ARISS is plotting a course to continue our mission in the government and commercial space realm beyond the targeted decommissioning of the ISS in the 2030 timeframe.

As you know, we've already been active in conducting ham radio operations in commercial space ventures including all four Axiom Space flights to the ISS and the Fram2 free-flying mission, and that's a big hint on where we'll be focused in the post-ISS era. ***We've identified commercial space stations as a key growth area for ARISS and we're in conversations with anyone and everyone in this emerging sector about making ham radio an asset for crews.***

Artist renderings of Starlab, Axiom Space, Orbital Reef and Vast commercial space stations

Based on publicly available information, there are at least four companies developing or interested in developing commercial space stations: Vast, Axiom Space, Starlab Space and Sierra Space's Orbital Reef. Vast has stated that it could have its four-person, single-module Haven-1 space station for low-Earth orbit as soon as 2027.

It's very cool to think that Amateur Radio could continue to be a presence on future earth-orbiting space stations. Kudos to ARISS to keep explaining what they're doing, and thinking, and advocating on behalf of Amateur Radio.

My thanks to Amateur Radio Weekly Issue 411 for highlighting this development.

AMSAT-US Trying To Get Some Attention from GEO Satellite Vendors

I cannot link to this article because it's behind the AMSAT-US paywall, and thus not publicly accessible. LEO and GEO in this context is Low Earth Orbit / Geosynchronous or Geostationary Earth Orbit.

Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, President in his **Apogee View** column in the January / February 2026 issue of AMSAT-US' **AMSAT Journal**:

Since the beginning of the year, I have reached out to two different aerospace companies that are advertising opportunities for hosted payloads in higher orbits, including GEO. Frankly, it's been difficult getting any response, especially when I see they've checked out my LinkedIn profile before not returning an email. So, I'm asking for help. If you are involved with this type of company or have contacts within, let's talk. Email me at aglasbrenner@amsat.org.

My goal is to find a modest communications payload opportunity above LEO. To that end, we are also putting together a small committee to begin developing practical payload ideas when we do make that contact.

This is mildly bad news that KO4MA isn't getting attention from these (unnamed, for the moment) GEO satellite companies. Mayhaps a bigger hammer needs to be applied to that effort.

But there are three *good news* items in those two paragraphs!

1. AMSAT-US ***is trying*** to arrange an Amateur Radio GEO payload (presumably that would cover the Western Hemisphere, or at least North America). This is a big change from the (as far as us in the public could tell) indifference by AMSAT-US about attempting an Amateur Radio GEO payload for coverage of the Western Hemisphere.
   This is (apparently) independent of the futureGEO project of the European Space Agency (ESA), with Amateur Radio involvement being coordinated by AMSAT-DL. That goal of that project is to develop an Amateur Radio GEO payload over the Atlantic Ocean that could potentially cover Western Europe and potentially the Eastern half of North America (mostly for the benefit of Canada, which is a member of ESA). AMSAT-US is one of the Amateur Radio organizations participating in this project.

2. AMSAT-US is serious enough about such an effort that they're putting together a *dedicated committee*, to discuss GEO. This is also big change from the (as far as us in the public could tell) indifference by AMSAT-US about attempting an Amateur Radio GEO payload for coverage of the Western Hemisphere.

3. KO4MA as the new President of AMSAT-US, is talking publicly about the potential of an Amateur Radio GEO payload for the Western Hemisphere, even if what he's currently conveying is the (momentary) bad news that he can't get a return email.
   It is a big deal that KO4MA is willing to "go on the record" that AMSAT-US is beginning to actively work towards an Amateur Radio GEO Payload for the Western Hemisphere. This is yet another big change for AMSAT-US, from the deafening silence from previous AMSAT-US presidents.

In late 2025, I rejoined AMSAT-US based on the change in attitude (becoming more progressive and increasing openness) that I saw in AMSAT-US making many of their publications over past decades available for public access through DLARC.

I also saw some new initiatives in plans for future AMSAT-US satellites that involved microwave, Software Defined Radio (SDR) and more use of data communications such as a future Packet Radio Satellite (PACSAT).

Another factor in rejoining AMSAT was that I felt strongly that if I wanted to have a voice in the direction of AMSAT-US (towards GEO, more use of microwave, more Software Defined Radio, more use of data communications like PACSAT), I needed to be “on the inside” as a (voting) AMSAT member.

Now, my rejoining AMSAT-US seems like fortuitous timing with KO4MA talking about the potential of a GEO payload, and other Zero Retries Interesting projects for future satellites. A long email to KO4MA asking “how can I help?” is in the queue.

futureGEO Article in Same Issue
In the same issue as the above there was another article related to GEO:
The futureGEO Project: Charting the Path to a New Era in Geostationary Amateur Radio by Paul Stoetzer N8HM. Again, *unfortunately, this article is behind the AMSAT-US paywall, and thus not publicly accessible*. Mostly it is a “report out” of the futureGEO workshop convened by AMSAT-DL which was held on 2025-09-19 at the Bochum Observatory in Germany. Much of the details of that meeting have previously been reported out in publicly accessible articles.

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